FINGER-TATUK PROVINCIAL PARK

PURPOSE STATEMENT AND ZONING PLAN

March 2003

Approved by:

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FINGER-TATUK PROVINCIAL PARK
Purpose Statement and Zoning Plan

Finger-Tatuk Provincial Park is 17,151 ha in size. It includes the immediate region surrounding Finger and Tatuk lakes, and extends south to include a group of smaller lakes north of the Euchiniko River Valley. The park was established in January 1999 following the recommendations of the Vanderhoof Land and Resource Management Plan.

The park is located 65 km south of Vanderhoof and 100 km southwest of Prince George. The park is located in the Nazko Upland Ecosection.

The park covers elevations ranging from 900 m on the shores of Tatuk Lake to 1,250 m at the Tatuk Hills. Primary drainages are Finger, Tatuk and Lavoie creeks and the Chilako River. The Tatuk Hills, Iron Mountain and the hills surrounding Finger and Tatuk lakes are important viewscapes.

Sub-boreal spruce forests cover the rolling terrain in this area of the Nechako Plateau. White spruce and lodgepole pine dominate the productive, mature forests, with pine and aspen in more open seral stands and paper birch found on moist, rich sites. Many wetlands and small lakes with abundant fish populations are found in poorly drained, post-glacial depressions in the southern half of the park.

The Finger-Tatuk Lake area was heavily used in earlier times by Carrier First Nations, as indicated by numerous archaeological sites around both lakes, on the islands, and a sizable historic village site at the mouth of Finger Creek on Tatuk Lake.

Primary Role
The primary role is to provide representation of the sub-boreal spruce, Engelmann-spruce and sub-alpine fir forests of the Nazko Upland Ecosection.

High value wetland and riparian areas provide habitat for ungulates, black bear, small fur-bearers, waterfowl, shorebirds and eagles. There is high value grizzly bear habitat between Finger and Tatuk lakes, with a food source from runs of spawning fish in Finger, Tatuk and Lavoie creeks and several unnamed tributaries

The area supports regionally significant populations of kokanee and rainbow trout. Tatuk Lake has a very productive kokanee fishery.

Secondary Role
The secondary role of the park is to provide a diversity of outdoor recreation opportunities, including boating, canoeing, hiking, picnicking, wildlife viewing, hunting, swimming and fishing. Due to its size, viewscapes and accessibility, Tatuk Lake is a popular local recreational destination. Both Tatuk and Finger lakes are popular for fishing, with kokanee up to two pounds and abundant rainbow trout. A number of the smaller lakes and streams in the park are also popular fishing spots.

Tertiary Role

The tertiary role of the park is to protect First Nations cultural values. The Finger-Tatuk area is part of the traditional territories of the Saik'uz First Nations and Nazko Indian Band. Food cache pits, burial sites, culturally modified trees, and several large subterranean lodge depressions are a few of the number of archaeological sites indicating extensive First Nations use. Indian Reserve #7 is located on Tatuk Lake.

Known Management Issues	Response
Forest Health – Mountain Pine Beetle	Significant financial resources have been dedicated to mountain pine beetle management in this protected area: 168 trees fallen and burnt in 1997, 42 trees in 1999, 900 trees in 2000, and 600 trees in 2001. In March 2000, an Ecosystem Management Plan was completed to provide management guidance. In October 2001 a Mountain Pine Beetle Strategy was completed. This assessment recommended discontinuing the fall and burn program, as the continuation of it was of questionable value. All fall and burn programs have now been discontinued. The park will continue to be monitored by aerial surveys.
First Nations	Continue to develop working relationships with Saik'uz and Nazko.
Funding Withdrawal - Operational funding for the three campsites was withdrawn in 2002 as part of the service Withdrawal initiative.	Monitor and encourage any organizations/clubs to become actively involved in site maintenance.
Adjacency Issues - timber harvesting to protected area boundaries (potential windthrow and access issues)	Review development plans and monitor industrial activity. Propose the de-activation of roads within 2 km of park boundaries.
Adjacency Issues	New Bobtail-Kluskus connector Forest Service Road will likely provide new ATV access to Finger Lake. Assess and monitor use and impacts.
Road Maintenance	Tatuk Lake road is in poor condition; potential liability issue and concern for the Environmental Stewardship Division. No funds are available for road maintenance. Monitor road condition.
Trapping	Existing traplines not under park use permit. Initiate and complete park use permit applications.
Angle Guiding	Develop process to determine commercial carrying capacity.
Fish Management - LRMP objective to improve fish passage in Chilako watershed.	As the headwaters of the Chilako is in the park, stream assessments will be required.

	Liaise with Chilako Watershed Council. Assess kokanee population and habitat at Finger Lake to determine population. Maintain adequate spawning population of kokanee– monitor water flow of Finger Creek (beaver dams).
Wildlife Management - Information lacking on grizzly bear populations	Inventory grizzly population Implement barb wire traps for DNA analysis

Zoning

The park has been divided into three zones:
Intensive Recreation (approximately 343 hectares or 2% of the park) to provide access to a variety of readily accessible, facility-oriented recreation opportunities;
Natural Environment (approximately 754 hectares of 44% of the park) surrounds the northern portion of the park and provides protection for the scenic values and provision of backcountry recreation opportunities in a largely undisturbed natural environment; and
Wilderness Recreation (approximately 9,262 hectares or 54% of the park) surrounds the southern portion of the park to provide backcountry recreation opportunities dependent on a pristine environment and to protect significant wildlife habitat.

CONSERVATION

Representation		
• ecosection	X	• Nazko Upland (NAU). 10.91% of this ecosection is protected, Finger Tatuk contributes 7.8% of the overall protected areas system representation of this ecosection.
• biogeoclimatic subzone/variant	X	• SBSmc3 – One of three protected areas contributing to the representation of the SBSmc3 (7.14% protected). Finger Tatuk contributes the greatest representation (51.63%) of this ecosystem. • ESSFmv1 – 7.88% protected. Finger Tatuk contributes 12.3% of the overall representation of this ecosystem. • SBSdw2 – 1 of only 2 parks contributing to the representation of the SBSdw2. This variant is very poorly represented (0.77%) in the protected areas system. Finger Tatuk contributes 16% of the overall representation of this ecosystem.
Special Feature	X	Grizzly viewing/feeding on spawning kokanee in Finger Creek
Rare/Endangered Values		Unknown
Scient...c/Research Opportunities	X	Stream channel assessment to identify potential barriers to fish migration. Initiate action as required. Inventory grizzly population – DNA analysis. Kokanee population and habitat assessment at Finger Lake.

RECREATION

Representation:		
• backcountry	X	Fishing opportunities for kokanee and rainbow trout. Camping in three existing recreation sites and two private resort facilities. Boating, wildlife viewing and hunting.
• destination	X	Fishing opportunities for kokanee and rainbow trout. Camping in three existing recreation sites and two private resort facilities. Boating, wildlife viewing and hunting.
• travel corridor • local recreation	X	Fishing opportunities for kokanee and rainbow trout. Camping in three existing recreation sites and two private resort facilities. Boating, wildlife viewing and hunting.
Special Opportunities		
Education/Interpretation Opportunities	X	Grizzly/salmon viewing First Nations sites

CULTURAL HERITAGE

Representation	X	Village site at Tatuk Lake with 16 pit house depressions and 25 cache pits. 16 archaeological sites and one village site recorded at Finger Lake.
Special Feature	X	Tatuk Lake village site

OTHER MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

Other Designations		Indian Reserve #7 on Tatuk Lake.
Relationship to Other PAs	X	There are 11 provincial protected areas within 75 km of Finger Tatuk including: Beaumont; Dahl Lake; Bobtail Mountain; Entiako; Kluskoil; and five ecological reserves.
Co-operative Management Arrangements		
Partnerships		
Vulnerability	X	Mountain pine beetle/fire. Multiple points of access due to harvesting roads. The Conservation Risk Assessment Process identified 3 risk factors (shape, size and terrestrial ecosystem replication) for the park and rated them as low significance. Six stressors/threats were identified for the park: forest harvesting activity and fire suppression were rated as highly significant; ATV/Quad, sport fishing and lodge were all rated as moderately significant; campground was rated as low significance.
Relationship to Other Strategies	X	Established through the Vanderhoof LRMP, which also provides management direction.

Area: 17,151 hectares

Date of establishment: June 29, 1999

Zoning Map - Finger Tatuk Provincial Park

Intensive Recreation
Natural Environment
Wilderness Recreation
Protected Area Boundary